

## Steve Harris



"From Chardin we had learnt that a pear is as alive as a beautiful woman, that common crockery is as beautiful as a precious stone. The painter had proclaimed the divine quality of all things before the mind that contemplates them, before the light that beautifies them." Proust.

Realism was not intentional for me, but a natural progression and I did not feel the need for another direction. But I have learned to understand some things about painting in the real, such as the fact that reality and truth are tangible.

As far as technique is concerned, I treat each painting as a new adventure, not knowing exactly where the end will be. I endeavour to go beyond the rules and push the boundaries. More often than not, I show the hand at work, like splatters of paint and the movement of a brush. I would get bored if I tried to present a technique that would perhaps be a little sterile. I would say it is more dynamic than dogmatic or rigid.

If I were to classify my realist approach, I would say it is not super-realism, photo-realism or surreal, etc. It may be something more like 'Spontaneous Realism.' For me the initial idea is the essence, with more attention being paid to the focal point. I do like the term 'Painting in the Real.'

I paint still life because I am always drawn back to the idea of seeing the ordinary or mundane in a new or different way, bringing back to life that which has been discarded and to give it regard, or to give the 'everyday' its day.

And of course, it would still be dead or mundane without quality light breathing upon it. The light is perhaps the most important aspect of each painting and to stage the subject as theatrical is for me, a most enjoyable element to my work.

There is another quote from Proust which I feel may be relevant; "The objects are summoned, out from the everlasting darkness in which they have been interred."

In a sense, I carry the same themes into the landscape and I very much enjoy the luminist time of day, those moments between night and day or day and night. When the light is dancing, shimmering and racing through the hues, behind and upon a subject that has been touched in some way by humanity. Light also gives us a perception of something that is much more eternal and majestic as our minds focus on ourselves and creation, and the light that beautifies it.

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